

Smoking Off in New York

The New York State Tax Department recently reported that cigarette tax revenues in that state for the eight months ending November 30th, 1953, were down considerably from the revenue totals for the same months a year earlier. It was the first decline in cigarette tax receipts in a non-war year since 1939—when the tax went into effect.

The Department says the decline indicates residents of New York State are smoking about 25,000,000 fewer packs of cigarettes annually than they did about a year ago. The loss of revenue to the State of New York caused by the drop in sales in the eight month period totaled \$500,000.

There is a difference of opinion as to the primary cause for the drop in cigarette consumption. Some attribute the drop to publicity connecting certain diseases with cigarette smoking. This publicity did not reach its

height, however, until the very last of the eight-month period measured, or even after November 30th.

At least two other factors seem to be influencing the cigarette market and one of them is the growing popularity of the king-size cigarette. This longer cigarette allows smokers the same amount of smoking with fewer packs and may be the main reason for the pack-sales decline. Another factor which may be causing the decrease is the price. Prices have gone up in New York and this naturally affects the market in a stabilized economy.

The cut in cigarette sales in New York is newsworthy in that it reverses a trend which seemed as if it would continue indefinitely. Although all states sharing this experience will suffer a loss in revenue, no doubt the several factors joining to restrain people from excessive smoking are a good thing for the chain addicts.

Agreement Near on Ships

The government of the Soviet Union has apparently moved closer to agreeing to return 186 naval craft sent them by this country under the Lend-Lease program during World War II. After many years of fruitless negotiations, the Soviet Ambassador in Washington informed the State Department several weeks ago that representatives of the U.S.S.R. would agree to meet representatives of the United States for "discussion of technical questions connected with the transfer of 186 naval craft."

By the time you read this, new developments might have occurred or negotiations might have broken down once again. We do not believe the latest Soviet note should be taken as a guarantee that the Russians are ready to settle this Lend-Lease debt. However, the notes of late have been more encouraging than any since 1945 and may indicate a willingness on their part to settle their World War II Lend-Lease debt.

In one of the Soviet notes in the current exchange, the Russians pointed out that they had returned to the United States three ice-breakers, 27 frigates, 7 tankers and one dry-

cargo vessel, and that Russia agreed to return 186 naval vessels. This admission was at least putting the Russians on record as "obligated to return these vessels to the United States."

The Russians have been attempting to tie in other settlements with the Lend-Lease settlement in an effort to use the return of the 186 naval vessels as a lever to pry the U.S. Government into an agreement on other matters. This the United States has consistently refused to do, and the latest indications are that the Russians may be at last convinced the United States will settle the Lend-Lease account only as a single issue, and on its merits alone.

If this indication proves an accurate appraisal, the Russians are preparing to remove one of the irritating obstacles in the way of better relations between the two countries. All Americans who know the facts have bitterly resented the Russian refusal to return these ships; it has been nine years since World War II and the refusal to return vessels rightly owned by the United States throughout this long period is one of that government's most flagrant and open violations of law and treaty.

Benson's Disposal Plan

Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson recently presented the administration plan to dispose of agriculture surpluses before the Senate Agriculture Committee. The Secretary is now engaged in what is generally conceded to be an uphill fight in an effort to get his farm program, and President Eisenhower's, enacted by Congress.

Despite the obstacles to be overcome in succeeding in this effort, there seems to be much support for the Secretary's proposal to dispose of crop surpluses. Mr. Benson proposed that Congress grant the authority for the Department to use up to \$1,000,000,000 worth of Government-owned surplus farm goods and fibers in the foreign aid program. This authority would extend over three years and the Government could use these surpluses

to aid the economies and to alleviate emergency conditions in friendly countries.

The Secretary made it clear that such authority would not result in the Government's use of these surpluses to upset any normal markets in this and friendly countries. It occurs to us that these commodities will be a valuable asset to the country's foreign policy since they could be used with great advantage in a number of situations.

For instance if the United States so desired it could use them in an economic war preventing enemy countries from selling these commodities by giving them away at the right time and place. This authority would constitute a major weapon in the cold war and unless tension is eased in the meantime, may be an expedient worth employing.

EDC Ratified by Dutch

The Upper House of Parliament in The Hague has approved the European Defense Community Treaty by a vote of 36 to 4. By this vote the Netherlands became the first of six nations concerned to complete ratification of the treaty.

Though both houses of the West German Parliament have approved the E.D.C. Treaty, there is a question of constitutionality yet to be decided and, therefore, the German ratification is not considered final. In Belgium the Lower House has ratified it although action must yet be taken by the other house as this is written. France and Italy are stalling, and the ratification issue has not come up in Luxembourg.

By approving the treaty, the Netherlands becomes eligible to receive the last fifty per cent of aid voted that nation by Congress last year. This is because former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, James J. Richards (D-S.C.) succeeded in writing into the present Foreign Aid bill a stipulation which prevents prospective E.D.C. member nations from receiving more than fifty per cent of their allocated aid fund until their approval of the E.D.C. treaty.

The issue has finally come to a head in Europe and it is just as well that it has. Either E.D.C. treaty nations are going to join to-

gether in a united front against Communism, or they are going to play an independent political game between the United States and Russia, designed to reap maximum selfish advantages.

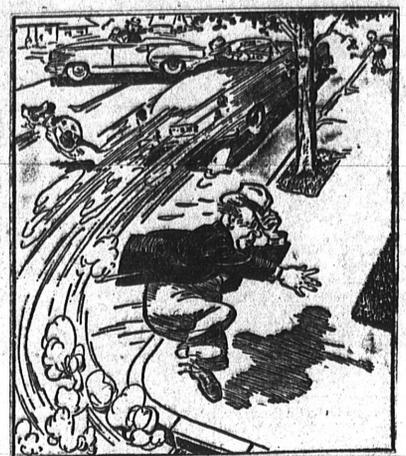
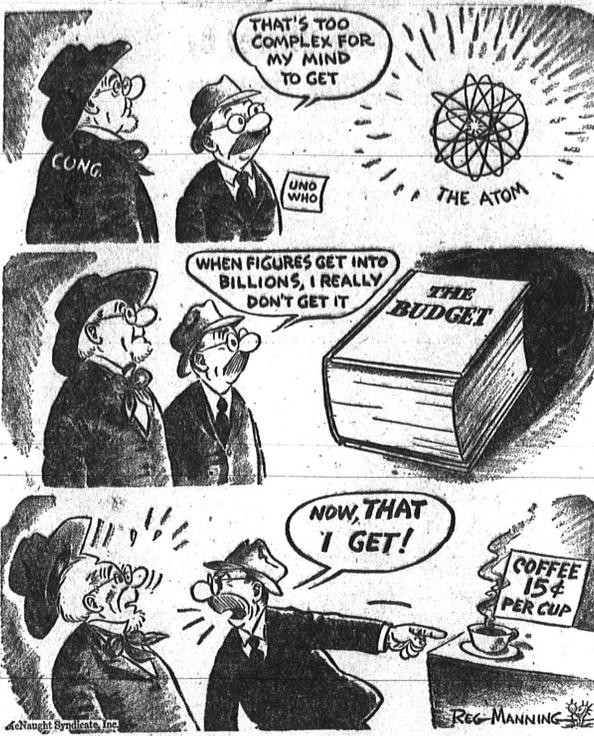
Government Fleet Pared

Joseph Dodge, Director of the Budget, said recently by July 1st the Government's automobile fleet will have been cut by 3,530 cars. By that date Dodge expects the Government to be maintaining 51,719 official cars.

This economy is expected to reduce the Government's capital investment in automobiles by almost \$10,000,000 and cut operating costs another \$2,000,000 each year. Both of these figures are significant economies and, considered over a period of years, the cuts will amount to sizeable sums.

The department which requires the most official cars is the Defense Department, which is estimated to be using over 30,000 official automobiles today. The number does not include those automobiles which are considered tactical or strategic vehicles, many of which are located outside of Washington. The economy drive in official cars will probably reduce the 30,000 Defense Department automobiles by over 1,800 units.

The Day's Problems



Will You Be a Statistic Today?

Ever look a statistic in the eye? Take a look in the mirror before you leave the house to drive to work this morning. Before the day's over, you'll turn up among the statistics—either as one of the drivers who had no accidents today or as one of those killed or injured.

It all depends on you. Because you are the driver who causes accidents or prevents them.

You are a statistic. One sure way to turn up on the accident side of the ledger is to get into an impatient hurry. Last year, insurance figures show nearly 70,000 Americans—almost 47 per cent of all fatalities—were killed by excessive driving speeds. Not much over the "safety limit"—

just enough to be fatal. Nearly 600,000 were injured the same way—or about 39 per cent of all traffic injuries.

Many of them were drivers who resented speed limits—drivers who thought limits were set by stodgy legislators bent on making motorists late for appointments. If you share that view, you're ready to fill a spot on the red side of the statistics column. Speed limits—better known as "safety limits"—are set by engineers who've tested and proved the safe margins for any given area.

Those engineers haven't tested and proved your car's mechanical safety... you have to take care of that—by letting the servicemen who know your make of car keep it in safe operating condition.

THE SQUIRREL CAGE CAPITAL NOTES

By Reid L. Bundy

Printer Bob Lewellen has a small list of items pasted to one of the file cabinets in his office that looks amazingly like a grocery list he is supposed to remember. However, the list includes those items which could be purchased for a buck before the war. A little investigation brings it up to date. Here's what your dollar bill would buy at various times recently:

- Before the War**
- 2 lb. Navy beans
 - 1 lb. coffee
 - 1 small can milk
 - 5 lb. flour
 - 5 lb. sugar
 - 1 pk. oatmeal
 - 1 jar chipped beef
 - 1 can tomatoes

- In 1945**
- 1 lb. coffee
 - 1 small can of milk
 - 5 lb. flour
 - 1 jar chipped beef
 - 1 can tomatoes

- In 1953**
- 1 lb. coffee
 - 1 small can of milk
 - Yesterday
 - 1 lb. coffee (providing you could dig up a couple of extra pennies).

Speaking of coffee, a nationally syndicated columnist did a little investigating last week and came up with the startling figure that the 29,000 persons employed in the Pentagon in Washington consumed a total of 35,000 cups of the stuff every day. He came to the conclusion that someone there was trying to stay awake.

That modern Hoosier wit Herb Shriner, would probably get a lot of support for a statement he made recently about taxes. Noting that Congress

planned to do something about hidden taxes, Shriner said: "Hope they don't just hide 'em better."

When a lady came into a nearby Edison Co. office to complain that she wanted a different kind of electricity service, she told the girl at the counter that she wanted the kind that she could turn her lights on anytime, not just after 6 p.m.

According to the January edition of the company magazine, an Edison Co. lineman went right out to see what the lady's trouble was—Yep, her house was wired in on the street lighting circuit.

Noted scientists have been quoted as saying that the H-bomb could destroy the whole world instantly. After giving the matter considerable thought, we have decided to adopt the policy established recently by a Medford, Ore., editor. In the event such a thing happens, the Herald will be open from 8 to 5 to refund unexpired subscriptions.

Some doctor has been quoted as saying that it's O.K. for a guy over 40 to mow the lawn and do heavy lifting. It turns out, however, that the doctor is on the staff of some college and doesn't have to depend on the good will of men over 40 for his living.

It's obvious that the poet by the side of the road who claimed to be a "friend of man" never tried to get his car out on that road.

Medical Costs

The first nation-wide consumer survey of medical costs in twenty years disclosed the fact that illness costs the families of the United States \$10,200,000,000 a year. Eight million families, or 16 per cent of those in the country, are forced into debt to meet obligations resulting from sickness or incapacitating injuries.

Lung Cancer

Tests to determine if tobacco tars can produce lung cancer in mice have been started by the United States Public Health Service. The Veterans Administration also in another long-range study, is sending questionnaires to 300,000 World War veterans to discover, if possible, if there is any connection between the use of tobacco or snuff and the development of lung cancer.

THEY SAY

- Syngman Rhee, President, South Korea:**
"Peace will reign only when the power-mad aggressiveness of communism is utterly destroyed."
- Dr. William Kaufman, psychiatrist:**
"Much of what we call emotional security is soundly backed by the proper uses of money."
- Jeanette Spanier, French style expert:**
"Americans far excel the French in casual clothes—but for ball games—ah, that is where the French are superb."
- Slain Weeks, Secretary of Commerce:**
"The nation is more productive and more powerful than ever before."
- William Giles, held in \$160,000 theft from U.S. Printing Plant:**
"If you're poor, you're poor. I was thinking of the future."
- Ruth Roman, actress, objecting to retouched photographs:**
"Sexy pin-up pictures are fine but if I'm going to do them I'll pose in my own curves."
- Charles Taft, former Governor of New Jersey:**
"You can't legalize it (gambling) or license it. You've got to keep fighting a constant war against gambling."
- Joseph B. Dellinger, public health official:**
"Everyone is a potential alcoholic."
- Robert H. Jackson, Justice, U.S. Supreme Court:**
"Education and religion are inseparable."
- Omar N. Bradley, General, U.S. Army, retired:**
"Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants."
- Victor Mature, screen actor, who does no "tree-lancing":**
"I have a contract... I get just so much for the stinkers as I do for the good ones."
- Joseph McCarthy, U.S. Senator from Wisconsin:**
"Where we find a Communist or an espionage agent—in the government or a defense plant—we'll expose him."

IT'S A FACT by JERRY CAHILL



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